



SWEET PEAS

ROBERT VONNOH

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AMONG contemporary painters few are more versatile than Robert Vonnoh, reproductions of whose works are found on this and following pages. Mr. Vonnoh excels as a painter of portraits, landscapes and figures; he holds fast to academic tradition and at the same time may be reckoned with those who are in the vanguard of progress. When it is a portrait he is painting his work is built up seriously and solidly, but when perchance the canvas on his easel is a figure composition, the object of which is primarily to charm, his touch is as light as that of the gayest and his effects as spontaneous as those invariably obtained by first intent. In fact, Mr. Vonnoh is one who, as the saying goes, "mixes his paints with brains"—one who not only feels, but thinks and studies. He is indeed a theorist, many years of

teaching compelling him to crystallize his convictions, and his theories are well founded and sound.

Born in Hartford, Connecticut, in September, 1858, Robert Vonnoh studied first at the Massachusetts Normal Art School in Boston and then in the Julian Academy in Paris under Boulanger and Lefebvre. After returning from abroad in 1883 he taught first in the Cowles Art School, Boston, and then in the school of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the Pennsylvania Academy, Philadelphia. With his teaching went hand in hand production; the principles that he laid down in the class room he demonstrated in his own work, which, however, he never permitted to become merely pedagogical. His portraits—in fact, all of his paintings—are essentially reticent, but they are never timid nor stereotyped. He is



DR. TALCOTT WILLIAMS

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a good draftsman, a good colorist, a skillful technician, but he is something more than all these, he is inherently an artist. His pictures do not astound by their cleverness, he resorts to no trickery to attain effects, but they wear well upon acquaintance. He is not a psychologist painting that which is unseen, but he has clear vision, and seeing accurately he transcribes truly. His portraits of Dr. Weir Mitchell, the distinguished author and physician, and of Dr. Talcott Will-

iams, the head of the lately established School of Journalism of Columbia University, both of which are reproduced herewith, are strong characterizations yet they are painted with reserve and without display of technique. His portrait of Mrs. Vonnoh, best known as Bessie Potter Vonnoh, the sculptor, is no less excellent as a likeness while possessing at the same time certain pictorial qualities. These are all toneful canvases, painted in a medium key, indoors



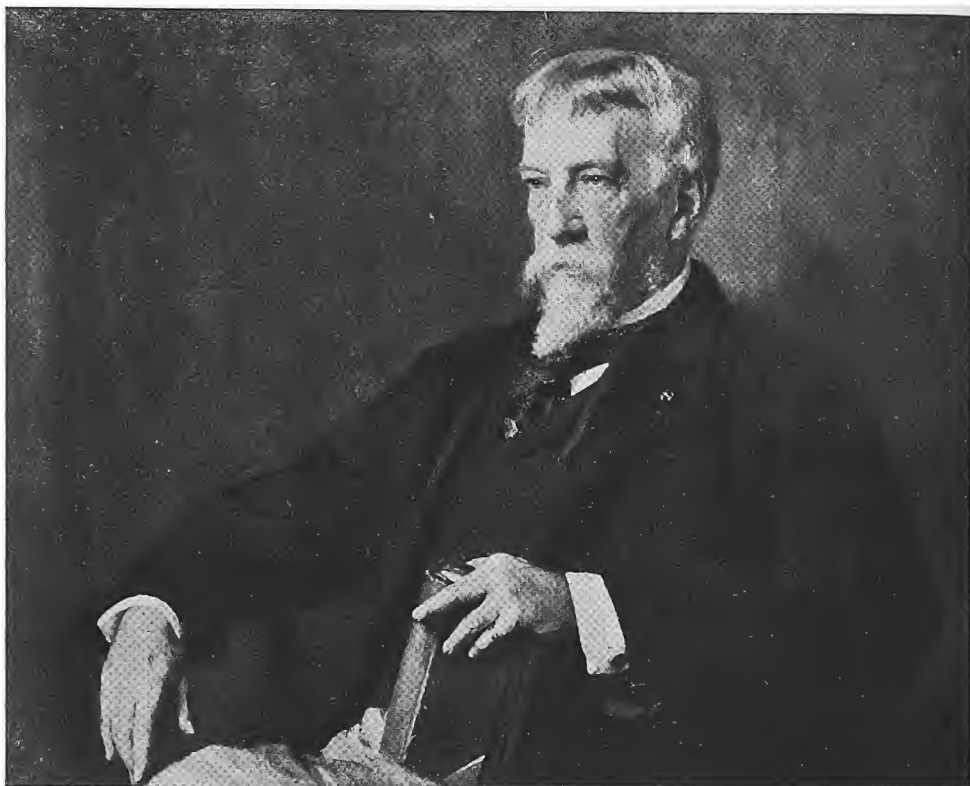
MRS. ROBERT VONNOH (BESSIE POTTER VONNOH)

ROBERT VONNOH

with the usual lighting as the people themselves might most frequently be seen. Not so the canvas entitled "Sweet Peas" or half a dozen others produced last summer in France and shown in the current exhibitions this winter. Here

the key is high, the illusions of light and air striking. These subjects are attacked as artistic problems and solved with not only consummate skill, but thorough knowledge of art.

The same may be said of Mr. Von-



DR. WEIR MITCHELL

ROBERT VONNOH

noh's landscapes, though they occupy, as it were, the middle plane between the portraits and the recent figure paintings, they are more reticent and less spontaneous than the latter, they are toneful rather than vibrant, gently satisfying rather than moving. But theirs is a lasting charm, making itself felt, not only on the instant, but as intimacy increases and the artist's message is more fully understood.

Mr. Vonnoh's winters are spent in New York, his summers at Grez-sur-Loing in France.

Mr. Vonnoh is a member of the National Academy of Design, New York Architectural League and the Fellowship of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, also a corresponding member of the Munich Secession.

Among the awards which he has received are honorable mention, Paris Salon,

1889; medals at the Paris Expositions of 1889 and 1900, and at the Pan-American Exposition at Buffalo 1901 and at Charleston 1902; in 1904 he received the Thomas R. Proctor portrait prize for work shown in the National Academy of Design's Annual Exhibition. Among his best-known paintings in addition to those illustrated herewith are "Companion of the Studio," "Portrait of the Artist," "November," "John G. Milburn," "Hon. John Russell Young," "Attorney-General Grills" and "Postmaster-General Charles Emory Smith."

Mr. Vonnoh's latest work is a portrait of Charles Francis Adams, President of the Massachusetts Historical Society. Among his pupils are to be numbered such painters of distinction as E. W. Redfield, Robert Henri, W. E. Schofield, Maxfield Parrish, Hugh Breckenridge and Charles Morris Young.



"GOOD NIGHT"

A SMALL BRONZE

BESSIE POTTER VONNOH